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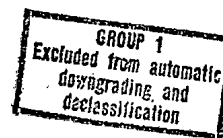
TOP SECRETTCS-1004-64/KH
31 January 1964Copy 2MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, NPIC
Executive Director, NPIC

SUBJECT: Photographic Evaluation Reports

1. The Photograph Evaluation Reports prepared by TID for each mission received by NPIC have proven to serve a very useful purpose. From a beginning eight years ago when a brief comment was prepared on the success of a mission, it has evolved into a comprehensive formal NPIC report. In addition to providing data on system performance and photo interpretation suitability, the report serves as a record of the mission, together with relevant information. TID is currently revising the format to better present these data.

2. The content of the Photographic Evaluation Report (PER) varies with the collection system. The requests for information pertaining thereto, and the characteristics of the KH-4 system, have necessitated a much more extensive report than is required for TALENT missions. At the request of NRO, reports are being prepared on KH-7 missions patterned after the KH-4 reports. The frequency of Golden Tree missions, staged from a domestic base, have resulted in an abbreviated report in cable form.

3. The NPIC PER is a comprehensive report from the user's viewpoint of the performance of a mission and the quality of the photography obtained. Other reports prepared by Eastman Kodak, AFSPPL and the NRO photographic evaluation team (PET) do not duplicate or serve the same purpose as the PER. The PER identifies the degradations of the photography and attempts to attribute each as appropriate to the camera, the processing, the environment or the handling. It also provides facts derived from analysis and mensuration that are requested by system planning and operating personnel. Subjective statements, pertaining to usability of the photography for photographic interpretation, express the coordinated opinions of both NPIC photo interpretation and evaluation personnel.

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4. A prime objective of the PER is to promote and maintain the maximum quality possible in the photography received by NPIC. Photo interpretation reporting can be only as informative as the quality of photography upon which it relies will permit. This objective is achieved by enumerating in the PER the achievements and degradations encountered mission by mission. The PER informs planning, operating and supplier personnel of system and equipment performance. The pattern of the quality of the resulting photography can be scrutinized and appropriate action taken when derogatory factors appear. In addition, the PER provides TID personnel a ready reference in complying to the many requests received regarding the collection systems, and the photography obtained therefrom.

5. Effectiveness in achieving the prime objective of the PER is demonstrated in the recent withdrawal of several "B" cameras from operational use by Hycon for calibration and adjustment. This was done as a result of the degradations in the photography enumerated in the PERs. Consequently, the photography currently being provided the photo interpreters is markedly improved. Similar improvements in the KH-4 photography is evident in the reduction of corona and light leak fogging, pressure marks and other derogatory factors, although diagnosis and correction in a system such as the KH-4 is entirely different from that of the TALENT type, for the camera and equipment are not available for inspection and testing after use. Other less obvious improvements have been achieved, such as better horizon imagery which permits more reliable attitude determination and thus more precise measurements.

6. In the course of evaluating the various photographic inputs to NPIC, TID personnel have acquired unusual skill in detecting and identifying degradations. This is put to good advantage in their accurate preliminary reporting from the processing site and in their assisting operational personnel during their frequent visits to NPIC to review the missions. This knowledge is also most helpful to TID in evaluating test photography and preparing requirements in support of systems under development or modification.

7. TID proposes to enhance its capability and intensify its efforts in working for continual improvement of the photographic inputs to the Center. Only by insistence upon achieving the highest quality photography possible can the NPIC expect to fulfill its mission and continue providing national photographic intelligence services of the highest quality.


Chief, Technical Intelligence Division

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